



Milwaukee County

Finance & Audit Committee

Supervisor Elizabeth M. Coggs, Chairwoman

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Contact: Harold Mester, Public Information Manager
414/278-4051 or harold.mester@milwcnty.com

FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE APPROVES AMENDED 2010 COUNTY BUDGET

Milwaukee, WI – Late Wednesday, the Milwaukee County Board's Finance & Audit Committee approved an amended 2010 County Budget which **calls for a property tax levy increase of 0.43%, the lowest increase in six years.** For a City of Milwaukee home assessed at \$150,000 last year, the County portion of the 2010 property tax bill will be approximately \$12.83 less than 2009. Without the vehicle registration fee, the property tax levy increase would have been approximately 3.85%.

Supervisors have heard loud and clear that Milwaukee County residents face a high property tax burden. In a November advisory referendum, County residents voted in favor of providing property tax relief through a small increase in the sales tax. Unfortunately, despite the wishes of voters, the Governor and State Legislature have failed to give Milwaukee County this authority. The most responsible alternative, approved by the Committee this evening, was a vehicle registration fee along with a tax levy increase that is among the lowest in our region.

"Anyone who has actually read the budget proposal knows that County Supervisors faced the daunting task of fixing a \$32 million budget hole left behind by the County Executive," said Supervisor Elizabeth M. Coggs, Chair of the Finance & Audit Committee.

With the amendments approved today, the Committee laid the groundwork for meaningful, long-range structural changes in a number of areas, including wages, pensions and health care. "Responsibly, we are turning to County employees in a more reasonable manner to meet the fiscal challenges imposed by the current recession," Supervisor Coggs added. "At the same time, we are restoring funding for key services including parks, public safety and human needs services for individuals who need the help most. They have nowhere else to turn."

"We cannot continue to rely on the property tax. Unfortunately, we have not gotten any leadership from the County Executive, yet we balanced his broken budget with the lowest property tax increase possible," said Supervisor Peggy West, Chair of the Health & Human Needs Committee. "Some may call this vehicle registration fee a tax. Fair enough, but understand that **the County Executive's budget proposal contained new taxes** on the poor, the mentally ill, the disabled, and seniors. They are people, too, and we have done our best to minimize the impact on safety net services."

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